

## Interview H0202 : with Taring, Jigme Sumten Wangpo Namgyal ['phreng ring, 'jig med sum rten dbang po rnam rgyal] and Sambo, Tenzin Thondrup [bsam pho, bstan 'dzin don grub], (India, 1992) : Part No. 5 of 7

*Taring and Sambo were important aristocratic officials in the Tibetan government. They discuss how Reting appointed kalön through the mechanism of senriy lotteries, and how Kapshöba promised to give Taktra a bribe of 50,000 dotse and also how Ngabö was appointed as kalön. The subjects talk about how Lungshar's son became an official using the name of the Lhalu family and how Lhalu was demoted and again became Tsipön and how Khardo shot himself. The subjects talk about Reting and the Chinese and the Sera Je incident. The subjects discuss how they heard about World War Two and the visit of Tolstoy and Dolan to Lhasa, as well as the expulsion of Chinese and other foreign spies from Tibet in 1948.*

Q

After Taktra took over the regency, who was the first kalön appointed by him?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was probably Surkhang.

Q

There was talk in Lhasa that a wall of gold was erected and a prayer flag was put on its corner, meaning Surkhang was given the kalön position because of the huge amount of gold offered by him. Were there any other important appointments made by Taktra, either kalön or Tsipön who were appointed through the senriy lottery?

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A

(Mr. Sambo) I doubt whether this system was really used.

(Mrs. Taring) The lottery system may not have been used because they didn't let them do the senriy because it would mean the chance to get a lot of bribes would have been lost. So there was very little chance to practice this system.

(Mr. Sambo) They put 8 or 9 candidates before the Regent for him to select one so the Regent will say such and such name has come out through divination.

Q

At the time of Surkhang's appointment, who were the other candidates?

A

(Mr. Sambo) During the time of Ngabö's appointment, it was done through senriy. At that time nobody wanted the post. At that time there was a lot of trouble and everyone was trying to avoid the appointment [because it meant going to Chamdo to face the PLA]. So at that time it was really done through a senriy divination..

(Mrs. Taring) It must be true because during Ngabö's appointment there was no talk of corruption.

Q

Who was appointed after Surkhang? Was it Kapshöba or Ramba?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was probably Ramba.

Q

How was he appointed?

A

(Mr. Sambo and Mrs. Taring) There must have been some corruption, but we didn't hear about it. He might have offered it without anybody knowing. Maybe he was just appointed because he was an important person among the tsidrung.

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Q

Did you consider that he was appointed because of loyalty and eligibility?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Of course, otherwise how could they appoint someone for such a key post?

Q

I heard Kapshöba gave a letter guaranteeing to pay the amount mentioned in the latter (tib. kyamdzin [skyabs 'dzin]) as a bribe to obtain the appointment, but later he could not pay the promised sum of money. Was that true? If so, how much did he promise to pay?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He promised to pay 50,000 dotse. At that time, the rate of one dotse was 10 rupees. Later when he could not pay this amount, he started losing his popularity and power.

Q

Do you think Kapshöba had the capacity to pay such a huge sum?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I don't think he really had the capacity, but he might have thought that somehow he would be able to manage to pay it. Since there was strong competition for the post, he might have written down the sum of money at random.

Q

Who was appointed after that?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Lhalu was appointed after that.

Q

Did Lhalu also offer bribes?

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A

(Mr. Sambo) I did not hear anything about Lhalu, but the talk about Surkhang and Kapshöba was well known.

Q

What post did Lhalu hold at the time of his appointment?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was a Tshipön.

Q

Isn't it true that during the Reting period Lhalu was completely terminated from government service?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, during the Lungshar trouble Lhalu was terminated. Not only terminated, but Lungshar and his future generations were not allowed to be government officials. At that time, Chapa Rusur was exiled to Kongpo. Lhalu was handed over to the Lhalu family with the order that he was not allowed to sit above a group of more than 3 people. However, after a few years, the Senior Lady of Lhalu who was very shrewd, got friendly with Trimön and gradually she declared that Lhalu was not the son of Lungshar, but the son of Shelkar Lingpa [tib. shel dkar gling pa].

Q

Was it the Shelkar Lingpa who is in Nepal at the moment?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No. His father.

(Mrs. Taring) That is true. We also heard Trimön told Shelkar Lingpa that most likely no one will ask you. However, if anyone does ask from the government side, you can simply tell them that, "I had an affair with Lungshar's wife." If you say that, no one will question you further.

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Q

I heard that Tsipön Shelkar Lingpa gave an affidavit to the Tibetan Government saying that Lhalu is his son. Is that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. When you entered Tibetan Government service, you had to establish the credentials of your bloodline. For example, when Ngabö entered government service, my father made a statement that Ngabö's blood is pure because my father was Ngabö's maternal uncle. So probably Shelkar Lingpa might also have made a statement at the Tsipön meeting that Lhalu was his son. Then Janglojen wrote a petition saying, "Lhalu Sey, who is the son of Lungshar, is making a false statement saying that he was the Shelkar Depön's son, [tib. lha sras lung phrug pha rgan shel mdar brdzus pas rgyu rkyen gyi go phud].

(Mr. Taring) Yes, they could not say that the kalön lama was Ngabö's father, so Kusangtse kalön wrote the affidavit saying that Ngabö's was his son.

Q

How did the son of Lungshar later become Lhalu?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Lhalu Gung and his son died, one after the other. Then there was another Gung known as the older brother, Jenpo Gung [tib. gcen po gung], who died during the 13th Dalai Lama's time. He was the husband of the senior lady of Lhalu. He was also a younger relative of Langdün. He and my father were the same age. They were very close friends and they studied together from Lama Urgyen [tib. o rgyan] of Sikkim. The other Gung died at the age of about 15 or 16 years. During that time, the Lhalu family performed a tremendous amount of religious rites. It was said then that the senior lady of Lhalu lost faith in religion because of so many deaths in her family and that she even raised up her chuba, showed her butt, and pissed and shit in the temple where there were three statues of Padmasambawa and his disciples and said that from now onwards I'm going to become a Muslim. Finally one day, she met the famous Phabongkha [Lama] and Phabongkha explained to her saying, how can people be saved from death by doing many rituals. If that were so, then all the rich people would never die and all the poor would die, but that

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is not the case, etc. He explained to her and later she became a Gelugpa. Before that she belonged to the Nyingma sect. This senior lady of Lhalu married Ramba Theiji. She asked the Dalai Lama to give Ramba Theiji to her and the Dalai Lama agreed. Before that she had married a lay official called Aku Jingpa [tib. a khu bying pa] who used to write funny things and later got separated from her.

Q

Which Phabongkha was this? Was this the famous Phabongkha?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. That one. There was a song about this: "Lhalu is close to the mountains, Lady Lhalu has got lost in the mountains. Ramba is close to the water, so he threw karmic retribution away into the river." [tib. lha klu ri thag nye bas/ lha lcam ri la shor song/ ram pa chu thag nye bas/ rgyu 'bras chu la skyur song].

(Mrs. Taring) This Ramba has two brothers. One became the Theiji and the other became the Shölpa. Both brothers had only one wife. I heard that the Theiji used to be the kalön appointed by the Chinese. The Chinese Ambans had appointed some kalön; they were known as Chinese kalön. But I think this Ramba later returned to the Ramba house.

Q

Did he return to the Ramba family after the death of the Dalai Lama?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was long before that. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama had died too and Ramba could not get on well with Lhalu's family. He might have stayed for about 2-3 months in Lhalu's family.

(Mr. Taring) Later they had a legal case that went for a hearing at the Tse ga and they had some strong arguments. Ramba did not stay as a magpa and went back to Ramba house, so naturally the old Lady got upset and she started the case.

(Mrs. Taring) Yes, I remember. Even though Tsarong intervened and tried to settle the case amicably, it did not work out. That time senior Lhalu Lady must have been 50 years old, so it had become necessary for the Lhalu family to have one young person to become a government official from the Lhalu family. So she asked Lungshar to give his son to

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become Lhalu's official as an adopted son. So when Lhalu came to Lhalu's house, he must have been about 12 or so years old.

Q

This was before the Lungshar trouble started?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. It was agreed among them to take a bride for the young boy. However, they held off for awhile, and when he grew to the age of 15 or 16 years old and then he started sleeping with the Senior Lady Lhalu. The lady was very kind to him. When he reached 20 years, then they had the present lady of Lhalu who was a daughter of the Thönpa family. So actually the Lady Londen [tib. blo ldan] of Thönpa and the lady of Lhalu were sisters from the same parents. These two ladies, Senior and Junior Lhalu, seemed to be having an understanding about this for quite some time and then Lhalu became kalön and went to Chamdo.

Q

In between that he had become Tsipön, is that right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was terminated from government service completely during the trouble and was re-appointed under the disguise of being Shelkar Lingpa's son. Then he became Senampa automatically. Once he was re-appointed, he was immediately appointed as kandrön. Probably he held the post for 4-5 years.

Q

How did the senior Lhalu Lady get to Trimön?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I heard that something like that happened [laughter]. Anyway Lhalu became Tsipön for 4-5 years and then was appointed as kalön.

Q

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Do you consider him as one of those people who was promoted to higher positions very fast?

A

(Mr. Sambo) After the termination of his services, he might have stayed about 2-3 years or so and then he started climbing immediately. Later, the Senior Lhalu Lady was able to secure the release of Lungshar from jail.

Q

The release of Lungshar was during the Taktra period or the Reting period?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Of course it was the Reting period itself. I also heard that Lungshar had written some letters to his son who is Lhalu now-a-days. The letter was in poetic form, saying, "Even though they may take away by force the wealth that is accumulated, they can't take away a person's knowledge of the dharma. Even though they may take away by force the eyes, they cannot take away one's wisdom. [tib. bsags pa'i nor rdzas btsan pos 'phrog na yang/ 'phags pa'i nor bdun 'di ni 'phrog thabs ci/ chu lbur mig 'bras btsan pos 'phrog na yang/ ye shes spyen yangs 'di ni 'phrog thabs ci] He wrote that to his son from jail. I personally talked with Lhalu and Lhalu confirmed he had received such a letter.

Q

How did he write a letter since he could not see?

A

(Mr. Sambo) That is the same question I asked Lhalu. Lhalu told me to close my eyes and start writing. While writing the letters, only some of the lines may go over and over, and sometimes lines are not straight, but otherwise it is okay.

Q

Later Lhalu was of the great sponsors of Phabongkha. When Lhalu was appointed kalön, was he sent immediately to Chamdo as the Doji?

A



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(Mr. Sambo) At the time Yuthok was the Doji, but he was not a kalön but a dzasa. At that time, there were two dzasa, one lay and one monk. So Lhalu replaced them as kalön. As Kham was a borderland and a very sensitive area, they decided to send a kalön.

(Mr. Taring) Wasn't Yuthok sent to replace Sursur [tib. zur zur] Dzasa?

Q

Was Yuthok a kalön in Tibet?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was only a dzasa.

(Mr. Taring) I thought Yuthok was the substitute for Sursur and Lhalu was sent as the substitute for Yuthok. When Lhalu was sent, he was appointed kalön from being a Tsipön and then very quickly was sent to Chamdo.

Q

I remember when Ngabö was appointed kalön, he was appointed Doji too. The appointments were made simultaneously. Was Lhalu too appointed in the same manner?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was probably done in that manner. Lhalu was quite a young man. He was about 33 years of age at that time.

Q

Sambo, were you in the regiment nicknamed "Dardrog" [tib. dar 'dregs] (which means they were frightened of the flag and fled)?

A

I was not in that regiment because I was sent to China to sign the 17-Point Agreement.

Q

Had Lhalu returned from Chamdo at that time?

A

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(Mr. Sambo) Lhalu had not returned yet. He was issued orders by the government of Tibet saying that he should remain in Chamdo. But then Ngabö who was the new Doji said that there was no point for him to continue to stay anymore. Later Lhalu returned to Lhasa. At that time, he was about 37 years old and his tenure of Doji has expired. So Lhalu might have stayed in Chamdo for 3-4 years. His name is Lhalu, Tsewang Dorje [tib. tshe dbang rdo rje].

Q

Who became the kalön thereafter?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Kapshöba also became a kalön from the position of Tsipön.

Q

How did Kapshöba become a Tsipön? Was it immediately after the Lungshar trouble? Actually, were most of the kalön appointed from the post of Tsipön?

A

Most of them were appointed from the post of Tsipön with the exception of Phünkhang, who was appointed kalön from the rank of gung.

Q

Which rank was higher, gung or the dzasa? Was the rank of a gung equal to the rank of kalön? How did Phünkhang become a gung? Was it because he was a Yabshi?

A

(Mr. Taring) The rank of gung was equal to the rank of kalön and they would sit above the dzasa. Phünkhang might be related to a Dalai Lama, so he was called gung.

Q

I don't think he was related to a Dalai Lama.

A

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Phünkhang belongs to the family of the Dalai Lama Khedrup Gyatso [tib. mkhas grub rgya mtsho].

Q

Anyway, even after his demotion from the post of kalön, he still retained the gung title, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably he remained as a gung.

Q

Why was Phunkhang demoted from the position of kalön?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was demoted during the Reting trouble. During the Reting trouble he was also arrested.

Q

Are you sure he was demoted during the Reting trouble? Before the Reting trouble, the German Heinrich Harrer arrived at Lhasa, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes.

Q

Reting Rinpoche returned [to Lhasa] from Reting once. It was about three years after his resignation. It was after the ordination of the Dalai Lama as a monk which was a year after Reting's resignation. Then after he remained in Reting for another year, he returned to Lhasa. When he returned the Lhasa, he was accorded a big welcome like that of a reigning Regent by the Government. For example all the government officers were asked to receive him. Was it true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) At that time, I was in India on pilgrimage.

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Q

Mr. Taring, do you remember when Reting Rinpoche stayed in Lhasa for a few months. Do you remember how things happened that time?

A

(Mr. Taring) I do not remember exactly what happened.

Q

If there was an agreement between the two Regents to hand over the Regency after three years, Taktra should have relinquished his post when that time had expired. He should have resigned. No?

A

(Mr. Taring) The Tibetan saying, "The thirst that cannot be quenched by drinking the ocean and the hunger that cannot be satisfied by eating the mountains" had become a fact in this case. Although Khyungram might have used these remarks against Reting, actually it became true in this case.

Q

Did you go to receive Reting when he returned to Lhasa?

A

(Mr. Taring) I may have gone to receive him.

(Mr. Sambo) My father received certain letters from Reting saying they were sent from the junipers of Reting, etc, but it was not of any importance. He would also send some gifts of dry cheese mixed with butter [tib. thud] which was delicious.

Q

Then what happened?

Q

(Mr. Taring) Probably he came for a pilgrimage to Lhasa.

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Q

Though the visit of Reting to Lhasa was said to be for the consecration of the assembly hall of Sera Je, the actual purpose was to take over the Regency, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) That was the actual purpose, but the declared purpose of his visit was the invitation of Sera Je. I do not remember why Sera Je invited him. However, it was the period of some trouble regarding Lhündup Dzong and the government gave a judgment quite contrary to the interests of Sera Je. Chönphe Thubten, one of the Trunyichemmo's brothers, was killed during the trouble and some people were also exiled.

Q

Was the brother of the Trunyichemmo killed?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes.

Q

What happened to the abbot? Did the abbot flee at that time after refusing to attend his office, and similarly was the Trunyichemmo's brother was killed by being hit with a quarter carcass of mutton [tib. sha lag pa gcig]?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, they banished the monks like the Rebe Gyawu and some monks and the abbot fled, but the Trunyichemmo's brother was killed by being stabbed with a knife to his body. He was Chönphe Thubten's real brother.

Q

No, I don't think so. I heard that they hit him with a quarter carcass of mutton which was brought to him as the bribe. It is true. But I heard a few monks from Sera Je visited him in his official residence in the district and explained to him the situation and the reasons for their action. But he didn't pay attention to their explanation and conversation became more and more heated. He thought that since he was the brother of one of the Trunyichemmo,

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the office under which this monastery also fell, he could take advantage of it and probably thought the monks would listen to what he said. So he issued orders to the monks rather than attempting to negotiate with them and obviously the monks refused to listen. They had a quarter carcass of mutton with them, and when they became infuriated, they beat him with the meat which they had brought to present to him. He died there instantly. Is that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was killed with knife. The examination of the appeal was done by committee of 8 Trunyichemmo and Tshipön, but Chönphel Thupten, since he happened to be one of the Trunyichemmo, he was withdrawn and in his place Dombo Khenche and my father, who was Theiji, were appointed. They were known as "the nine, the 7 Tshipön and Trunyichemmo and the theiji and khenche" [tib. tha'i khan drung rtsis dgu sbrel]. These nine people were appointed to investigate the case. This was the first time an investigatory committee had such a composition.

Q

What I heard was that the monks from Sera Je refused to appear before the investigation committee, so finally they could not pass any judgment. Was that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Something like that happened because there was trouble for a long time. The monks refused to come. I remember that such a thing happened.

Q

Was it at this time that the abbot of the Sera Je also refused to appear at the Investigation Committee and instead sent his yellow robe [tib. chos gos] to be given to the government, while he fled.

A

(Mrs. Taring) Was that the same abbot who fled to China?

Q

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This abbot later returned to Lhasa. At that time he came with great pomp and show, and all the government officers and the lamas and abbots of all the monasteries went to receive him.

A

(Mrs. Taring) Was he given some high [Chinese] title?

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, he was Deputy Chairman [ch. fu zhuxi] of somewhere.

(Mrs. Taring) It was during the period of Chinese Communists, right?

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. In 1956 I saw him along with Trepela. His colleague pointed him out and said, "That is the abbot." He learnt from his colleague that he was the abbot who ran away and the government demanded his head and hands.

(Mr. Taring) One was killed on the roof of Sera Je, right?

Q

No. That was not him. After the abbot ran away to China, the government appointed somebody to be the abbot of that college who happened to be in favor of the government. He was later killed by the monks of that college.

A

(Mrs. Taring) It was horrifying. How could the monks there kill the abbot?

Q

They didn't have any choice but to kill him because this abbot was a two-faced person. He attended the government meetings and informed them of the activities of the monks. It was said that Kapshöba told the monks that the abbot said such and such at the meeting so the monks killed him.

Q

(Mrs. Taring) That is why Kapshöba was known as the damaru drum [that is hit on both sides, i.e., was two-faced].

Q

Later Kapshöba also told the monks of Sera Je that he was a friend of Sera Je and tried his best to save the monastery. Not only that, when he became the magji to attack Sera,

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he explained to the monks that he, as a kalön, volunteered for the job because he wanted to save the monastery rather than destroy it. Is that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He didn't let the soldiers throw bombs indiscriminately and throw them on the roof of the college, and he didn't destroy it completely. Otherwise, he could have destroyed it completely.

Q

If the bombs were thrown on the roof, it might have fallen apart. Moreover, Kapshöba sealed the doors of the monastery and did not let soldiers enter it. If any had entered the monastery, it would have ended up in the same condition as that of Reting, but Kapshöba stopped them. Is that true?

Q

(Mr. Sambo) At that time, Yügyal Sandutsang was caught by the soldiers and it was Kapshöba who ordered the soldiers to let him go. Otherwise he would have been killed by the soldiers.

Q

(Mrs. Taring) Yes, yes, I remember. This was the man who died in a car accident in Switzerland. He was a nice man.

Q

What happened to Yügyal that time? Did he go to China?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was a monk from Sera Monastery so the soldiers caught him. Kapshöba was the magji and he ordered them to release him.

Q

Were the soldiers really going to kill him?

A



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(Mr. Sambo) Certainly they were. But he was let go and then the trouble was over. He went to India and remained in India forever.

Q

When you were talking before about the abbot of Sera Je, we were confused between the abbot who ran away to China and the one killed by the monks. We want to focus on the abbot who ran away and his activities. So the abbot refused to obey the government orders and didn't come to the Investigation Committee and the government could not withdraw the abbot nor could they arrest him. So finally they decided to solve the trouble by insisting the monastery hand over the people responsible to the law of the land. Wasn't that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No. There was no such thing as negotiations by the government asking them to hand over the responsible persons. My father was one of the Investigation Committee members at that time. The committee met in the Shöl Parkhang. It called the concerned people one after another from the front door for questioning and straight away took them to the second floor and then through some secret passage and locked them in Sharchenjok prison. Once they got hold of one person, they immediately gave the judgment and exiled him. When the judgment was passed on the person called for questioning, they were immediately arrested and transferred through a secret passage so that the last person who was waiting for the interrogation did not know what happened to the people before him. So the question of negotiations and handing over the responsible persons did not arise. At the time of Reting's visit to Lhasa, Sera Je explained this treatment and the judgment of the government to Reting, who was very upset.

Q

Reting was supposed to have written a personal letter to the members of the Investigation Committee as well as to the Regent himself, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Reting was very unhappy. The misunderstandings between the two Regents started from here.

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Q

Is that true? Was the appointment of Surkhang as kalön and the demotion of Phünkhang from kalön and the appointment of Lhalu, not only to Tsipön but also very quickly to kalön, the main cause of misunderstanding between the former and present Regents?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Wasn't the cause of misunderstanding the fact that Taktra's chandzö wasn't given the rank of dzasa?

(Mr. Sambo) This was a small matter. In any case, he became dzasa later when the Regent took the title of Huthogthu. Oh yes, then he was known as Chandzö Chemmo. Then later he was known as the "Private Dzasa," (Kuger Dzasa [tib. sku sger dza sag]), the highest title for a manager.

Q

Did Reting complain of his displeasure to the Regent Taktra personally about the Lhündrup Dzong episode?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably he did. Since it was not himself who was directly involved so it was easy to discuss his concern, but Reting could not discuss with the Regent that he wanted to become Regent now. However, regarding this episode, he could very well say, as we have been saying that, "If one can put the head through [an opening], one can try to push the shoulders also." [tib. mgo thar dpung 'dzud]. He might have done that. Though Regent Reting expressed his displeasure at the actions of Taktra, Taktra did not show any indication of a willingness to hand the regency back to Reting. At the same time, Reting's manager and staff, and Nyungne Lama and Khardo, etc.. were also insisted that Reting should try to get back the regency.

(Mrs. Taring) Yes, yes. Though Reting may not have desired to become Regent again, the people working under him definitely insisted that he should become the Regent again.

Q

What would Khardo and Nyungne Lama have to gain for themselves if Reting became the Regent again?

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A

(Mr. Sambo) They had no hope of getting the regency for themselves, but if Reting became the Regent, automatically their status would rise.

Q

Khardo and Nyungne Lama were neither the chandzö of Reting nor were they in his managerial staff [tib. lde 'chang], right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Nyungne Lama was much more than the dzasa of Reting because he managed Reting completely and the real chandzö did not know anything that was happening.

(Mrs. Taring) That was true. He really knew everything about Reting Labrang's day-to-day functions and its important policies were all made by him. I remember when they met together with Tsarong, Nyungne Lama complained to Tsarong in the presence of Reting Regent himself. Reting was very extravagant and wasted money on useless things. I remember very clearly that he told him that the Regent spent 75 dotse this year only to fly kites. Reting Regent had the habit of flying kites.

(Mr. Sambo) Reting Regent used to have very special kites made exclusively for him. These kites were sometimes yellow, with red eyes and sometimes white with red beard face design. Anyway, when people looked up in the sky they could immediately distinguish Reting's kites from others.

(Mrs. Taring) Nyungne Lama was a very intelligent person. He had even visited Mongolia. He also functioned like the mother of the house in Reting Labrang just like Mr. Tara [the Dalai Lama's private secretary] functions in Dharamsala for the Dalai Lama these days. Nyungne Lama was a very nice man and a very intelligent person.

Q

Do I remember correctly that Nyungne Lama was a short fellow and had some defect in his eyes, either his right or left eye. And that he wore old and shabby clothes and he would come to our Labrang.

A

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Yes, that was the fellow.

Q

During the Reting trouble, I was in my house in Lhasa and Nyungne Lama came to the house, up to the door, and our servant told me that Nyungne Lama was coming, what should I do? At about the time Nyungne Lama came near the door, and then thought for a while, and went away. He might have thought my parents were in India. He might have thought there was only the young Lama left in the house. Anyway he didn't come inside my house.

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably that might have happened. Later in the Tsondu, the Regent [Reting] himself accepted all the charges. It had become absolutely hopeless and he had to accept the charges. He had no other alternative because they showed the documentary evidence of the letters exchanged between Reting, himself, and his managers and other staff. For example, the letters written to Nyungne Lama and Khardo and so on and so forth were showed to him. Because there were a few found after they sealed the property of Reting Labrang, they had time to go through the important documents. Finally, Reting himself was invited to the Tsondu. The first thing they did was that instead of putting the question to him, they gave him the file which contained all his correspondences. So he had no alternative but to straight away get up and prostrate 3 times and accept all the charges.

(Mrs. Taring) To whom did he prostrate in the assembly?

(Mr. Sambo) It must be to the present Regent or the Dalai Lama. Whatever, it may be he prostrated three times and apologized and accepted all the charges leveled against him. Similarly, Khardo also accepted that he himself was responsible for sending someone to shoot Lhalu, which he was not even asked about, but he voluntarily admitted it. Khardo revealed that Nyungne Lama manufactured the bombs and so on and so forth.

(Mrs. Taring) They might have thought it was like gold and silver and thought of keeping some and didn't send it to the Regent but sent it to the house of the Trunyichemmo?

(Mr. Sambo) No. It was not like that. I accept that Nyungne Lama made the bomb. However, I don't accept that Nyungne Lama was responsible for sending the bomb to Trunyichemmo Gyambungang's house. Not only that, the question of the bomb in Gyambungang's house and who delivered the bomb, etc. was not very certain. [It is indicating that the explosion of the bomb in Gyambungang's house may not be true.]

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\ (Mrs. Taring) Did or didn't Reting admit that he was not a pure monk [kept this vow pure] to the assembly.

(Mr. Sambo) No one can put such a question. Such a question never arose.

Q

Was there no talk about Chiang Kaishek and the telegram at the meeting? The telegram that was sent by Khendrönlosum. He was reported to have confessed that he had agreed to let Taktra remain as Regent for 3 years and then Taktra was supposed to return the regency to Reting. Since Taktra did not return the Regency, the trouble started. Therefore, no one such as his dzasa or Khardo or whoever should be blamed. It was totally the fault of Reting himself. This is what Reting was supposed to have said before the assembly. Is that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No. There were lots of things. I was in the meeting and they did show him the letter first and he apologized and made 3 prostrations.

Q

Weren't the three prostrations by Reting done later? Didn't he attend the Tsondu for 2-3 days and insist he be allowed to see the Regent (Taktra) personally? Did he say, "All the crimes were mine. Moreover, everyone who was present there are all known to me and you, so please help me this time to be able to meet the Regent Taktra personally. I must meet him?" Then he got up and he did the prostrations. At that time some of the dzasa who were facing Reting moved to either side. Wasn't that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) At that time there was a telegram from Khendrönlosum saying that if the Regent (Taktra) did not resign, Chiang Kaishek will send soldiers to Tibet.

(Mrs. Taring) When did that telegram sent by Chiang Kaishek that said that they are not allowed to touch Reting, come?

Q

That was immediately after the arrest of Reting. It was when Reting was in Sharchenjog.

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A

(Mr. Taring) Didn't the Regent send 2 kalön all of a sudden? Did we talk about this?

Q

No. Let us go back. So Reting went to Lhasa for the consecration of Sera Je. Then Reting realized that the present Regent had no intention of giving up the regency and further noticed that there were no kalön present in the Tsondu except for Kapshöba who was known to himself. All the other important posts such as Tsipön and Trunyichemmo who had been appointed by him (Reting) had been removed and all the kalön had been changed. So when Reting realized that Taktra had no intention of returning the regency, Reting's own desire to get back the regency became stronger. Wasn't that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I heard that Surkhang has written about this.

Q

It was not clearly written.

A

(Mr. Sambo) Later both Surkhang and Lhalu went back to Reting to arrest him and told him that there is an important discussion to be held so we were sent to invite you. At that time he asked them why they came? Not only that, Reting reportedly said, "I have already resigned the post of Regent and now I wonder why two kalön had come here?" And the kalön said, "Who knows, we don't know anything." At that time, they were making arrangements to have a horse for Reting. I remember that Surkhang told me that he thought that if he rides on his own horse, he would run away. They did not want that to happen so they asked Reting to ride a mule.

(Mrs. Taring) Did they say that they were very scared when they sought Reting's hand blessing?

(Mr. Sambo) No. By that time the soldiers had already reached there. The Fourth Rupön went in and took a sort of blessing from Reting and told him to please come and he probably held his hands.

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Q

I have heard the soldiers came before the kalön arrived, and the Fourth Rupön sought an audience and reportedly said that they were on their way to a border area where some trouble had started. On the way, they had come here to get blessings from Reting. Shortly after that, the two kalöns arrived and the kalön did prostrations to Reting. They also took off their hats and touched their heads with Reting.

A

(Mr. Sambo) I was told they were left there for a while. They stayed there for a while. And not only that, but the two kalöns were kept in separate rooms and they had their bag [food] served in a private room. At about that time, they met Surkhang separately with a present of something like three or four hundred dotse and said it is impossible to take Lhalu into confidence but you may kindly consider the interest of the Reting Labrang. Such a thing like this I remember vaguely that Surkhang told me.

Q

Since Reting himself realized there was a great deal of change in the important officials of the government, did that emotionally hurt him?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Reting probably knew that on top of the Sera Je episode which made him very unhappy, there were the changes. Moreover, he sensed that there was no chance that the old Regent will hand over the regency. Reting had hoped to have it handed over, but his hope didn't work out, so he might have decided to send Gyapön Bu to China.

Q

How did the shooting of Lhalu take place? Who really shot at him?

A

(Mr. Sambo) That was on the night when Ngabö was celebrating his new appointment as Tsipön. Naturally he invited all his new colleagues, so Lhalu was there too. Lhalu was a Tsipön at that time, and I was there too. Lhalu finished his dinner and then said, "I have to take leave" and he left. We spent the night in Ngabö's house. The next morning some

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servants of Ngabö went around the town early in the morning for circumambulation. When they came back, they informed us about the shooting of Lhalu which took place that night. No physical harm was done to Lhalu they said. Probably he was shot at near Jerag [the sandy area below Sera]. He was on his way home.

(Mr. Taring) At that time, he crossed the stone bridge of Jerag and he was going back home and the bullets hit his horse but it was still able to take him to his house. The horse really took him to the stone stage [tib. chibs bkyag] where he normally used to dismount.

(Mr. Sambo) That is very true. The bullets went through the horse. That time there was someone holding the horse, but then the horse started running and Lhalu instructed the man to let the horse go. So Lhalu rode on the horse properly and then the horse galloped.

Q

Who was holding the horse?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was one of his servants.

Q

Did they shoot only once?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No, several shots were fired. The horse took him back to his normal place of dismounting. Then when the horse was going back to its stable, it fell down and died. When Lhalu returned to his room, he found something in his pocket which happened to be a bullet. It was said that Lhalu was saved by the protective talisman which was on his body.

(Mrs. Taring) It was the very good blessed pills [tib. byin rten] given by Phabongkha.

(Mr. Taring) Did the talisman really protect him?

(Mr. Sambo) I do not know whether it was due to that or whether the power of the bullet was not enough, but if the talisman really protected him, it was amazing.

(Mrs. Taring) It was naturally his own karma. It was not the time for him to die.

Q

Did anyone know who shot him?



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A

(Mr. Sambo) No, nobody knew who shot him. The next day they sent a few servants to track it down and they found footprints of a few people. When they started tracking the footprints, they disappeared so they could not trace them anyone. So they could not find who really did this and probably even Lhalu himself gave up the hope of finding the culprits. Later, Khardo confessed that he shot at him.

Q

Probably because the Lungshar trouble was already over and Taktra had appointed Lhalu as Tsipön, they expected that Lhalu was going to cause them trouble.

A

(Mr. Taring) I heard that at that time there was some kind of case in the Tsikhang with regard to some people who were supposed to have shot at him.

(Mrs. Taring) That was true. We also heard that no one ever thought of Khardo.

(Mr. Sambo) No one ever thought of Khardo including Lhalu, but Khardo himself admitted that he was responsible for that. No one had asked him any questions. Probably Khardo might have gotten too scared. He might have thought that Nyungne Lama might have already confessed it or even Reting Rinpoche might have admitted it, so he might have thought it is better to admit it voluntarily.

Q

This Nyungne Lama must be a very strong person?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. He was definitely a strong, determined man.

Q

If the dzasa had not been frightened and shaken [tib. brdar gsig rgyag], could Nyungne Lama have acted differently?

A

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(Mr. Taring) Yes. If the dzasa had not been so frightened and cowardly, then Nyungne Lama planned to destroy all the Tshipön and all the Trunyichemmo and other important officials who had come to Reting's house to seal the property.

Q

Hadn't Nyungne Lama already sent a message to the dzasa saying, "Lhalu and Surkhang have already left for Reting and I have already sent somebody to Reting with this information and I am sure people will come here to seal the property in the house in Lhasa today, so we had better seize them. When he said this, the dzasa said no, no, I can never do that. Then Nyungne Lama suggested that if you cannot do that, then we will invite them inside the house for food and tea, and when they go inside, we will close the door and take a hand bomb [grenade] each and then we will throw the bombs. We will die and they will also die. When he said that, the dzasa replied, Oh! We I can never do that."

Q

(Mr. Sambo) I talked with the dzasa when we went for on tour to China and he told me that he was given 100 lashes. I told him that these lashes were not that bad because when we were in the school we got the same lashes. Then the dzasa replied that those lashes were not like the school lashes, they were so severe that we got pains inside our bones. According to this, they lashed him very severely.

Q

The senior dzasa did not listen to any of the suggestions of Nyungne Lama, so he had no power to decide this by himself so he shot himself. Otherwise if they had seized and taken the government officials to Sera Monastery, then probably the government would have become helpless. When the important officers, including the Trunyichemmo and Tshipön arrived at their house, the dzasa was not in. However, the Khamba monks who were arranged to be there by Nyungne Lama were running up and down, their hands inside their pockets. Lukhangwa (the Tshipön) began to realize what was happening so he started asking the others whether they had any knives with them. So probably for 45 minutes to an hour the officers were left in the house without any aid. The younger Tsarong happened to be there and he was really scared because at that time there were about 50-60 monks from Sera and a large number of Khambas, each one of them carrying two guns, a long and short gun each, and they were going up and down.

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Q

(Mr. Taring) If that was the case, then those monks could have simply seized those officials. If they took them as hostages and said that if you make war against us, these people will be destroyed.

Q

When Reting would have come down, they could have said, "The Trungtsi are here, now what are you going to do?" They could have done anything they wanted if they had these officials as hostages.

Q

(Mr. Sambo) The [young] dzasa didn't really know what happened. He was not even called to the meetings. He was not capable and was young. These were the reasons.

Q

What about the old dzasa?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I don't not know about the old dzasa. Maybe he knew a little bit, but Nyungne Lama and Khardo and one or two other insiders knew.

Q

According to you Mr. Sambo, how was Regent Reting himself not aware that they were coming to catch him?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I have no idea. They left at midnight from Lhasa to Trapchi and then went from there [to Reting].

(Mrs. Taring) Lady Delerabten told me that they were not aware of this at all.

Q

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How did this happen? Did the bomb explode in the Trunyichemmo's house? Did the Trunyichemmo report to the Kashag that a bomb exploded in his house. Did the Kashag call the Trungtsi and then inform them, or did they call the Tsondu and reveal it there?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was only the Trunyichemmo and the Tsipön. No meeting was ever called. On that day itself, the telegram from China also arrived. In that telegram it was mentioned that these statements cannot be read by anyone below the rank of kalön, so the interpreters were unable to translate it and they had to read the telegram to the Kashag with the help of a dictionary. In that telegram it stated that if Regent (Taktra) did not resign, they will send soldiers into Tibet.

Q

Was the telegram sent in response to a request from Reting Labrang or was it just the decision of the Chinese government?

A

(Mr. Sambo) They were trying that. Later it came out.

Q

What came out?

A

If Reting became Regent again, he would offer the territories below Chamdo to the Chinese.

Q

Was it a promise to give all the territories below Chamdo to the Chinese or just some dzong and estates, whichever they wanted, below Chamdo?

A

(Mr. Sambo) They said below Chamdo which includes a large number of areas in Kham province such as Lharigo and also Pembar and Lhodzong and Traya, etc., were included.

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(Mr. Taring) I have my doubts about this, because even if they offered this territory, how could the Regent, who was one man, decide to give away territories without consulting the Tsondu. So that was doubtful. Though they might have received such a telegram promising to offer such a huge territory belonging to Tibet, that was not a small item which they could put into their pocket and give to somebody. It was a big territory and without consulting the Tsondu, it was not possible to give them the territories. Was this true?

Q

I have heard it was only the dzongs and estates below Chamdo.

A

(Mrs. Taring) If they had sought Chinese help, that was good enough for the Chinese even without giving districts or anything.

(Mr. Sambo) Reting enjoyed the rank of Committee Member in the Tibet-Mongolia Commission [ch. meng zang wei yuan].

Q

What does that mean?

A

(Mr. Sambo) They probably gave him a rank like director [ch. zhu ren] of the Tibet-Mongolian Office. The dzasa told me about this.

Q

When was that offered?

A

They offered this when Huang Musong was there.

Q

Was that rank offered to Reting with a ceremony or anything?

A

There was no ceremony. He was just given the rank including also a medal.

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Q

Oh yes, that was presented to many. I remember that my father also received one which had some drawings and pictures and some large letters.

A

(Mrs. Taring) Yes. Huang Musong presented such medals to many. I remember.

Q

Did he offer this so-called medal to all the government officials?

A

(Mrs. Taring) No. Maybe it was given to people ranking above Senampa or Letsenpa.

(Mr. Sambo) Later, Taktra also received a title called Kenting Tako Shri [tib. kan ting ta ko shri] something. [laughter]

Q

Since it was during World War II, what did the abbots, the ordinary persons in the streets, or the leaders in the government think of the WWII. Especially about China which was very poor at that time. It had become very poor and there was a civil war in China.

A

(Mr. Sambo) I don't think anyone knew there was a civil war in China at all.

Q

Did you know that WWII was going on?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I knew about that.

(Mr. Taring) Not everyone knew, especially the northern nomads, but in Lhasa, they knew it.

Q

I remember people in Lhasa talking about Roosevelt and Churchill.

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A

(Mr. Sambo) We used to talk about China, America, Russia and Britain, etc. being involved in the war and we used to call it CRAB. C stands for China, R stands for Russia, A stands for America, B stands for Britain.

Q

Though the officials like you were aware of the war, what about the monks in the monasteries and the people in the villages? What did they know?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Everybody had heard that some world war was going on and it was considered quite a danger and an emergency.

Q

When you heard about WWII, what impression did you have?

A

We heard in Lhasa that airplanes were shot down and the war had destroyed and sunk ships and so on and so forth.

Q

This is directed to Mr. Taring, I am sure you listened to the radio, didn't you?

A

I had no radio, but I got the Statesman newspaper from Kolcutta.

Q

Do you get it all the way to Lhasa?

A

Yes. Up to Gyantse the British brought it, and then they sent it by post to me in Lhasa.

Q

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How long did it take to reach you?

A

(Mr. Taring) It took about two weeks, but we got it.

(Mrs. Taring) How can you say we had no radios. You may be mistaken with Tsarong House.

(Mr. Taring) I did not have a radio. You may be getting mistaken with Tsarong house. In the newspaper at that time, I saw the map showing the German positions and the Russian positions very clearly on the maps at that time. Moreover, Life Magazine used to reach Tibet. Though we didn't receive Life Magazine, Tasrong used to receive it regularly. So we didn't get current news, but we get old news as news.

Q

It is strange that Life magazine was available in Tibet. Did you receive the Statesman regularly in Tibet until 1959?

A

(Mr. Taring) We received the Statesman regularly.

(Mrs. Taring) However, after the arrival of the Chinese in 1950, we stopped the Statesman in accordance with the 17-Point Agreement signed between the then Tibet Government and China.

Q

Were you prevented from receiving any news items from abroad?

A

(Mrs. Taring) In the agreement it was mentioned that foreign reactionaries are to be terminated and so we stopped taking newspapers since then. So the question of getting papers didn't arise.

Q

During WWII, what did the Government of Tibet do? What did they explain to the people? How did they know whether there was WWII going on in the world?



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A

We knew that the government was performing religious rituals.

Q

For whom were they performing the rituals, for the Allies or the Germans?

A

It was for peace. Then in 1942 Col. Tolstoy and Dolan came to Tibet. These two were Americans. They came to gain passage from the government to pass through Tibet and go to China via Jyekundo. At that time, Derge sey Kelsang Wangdu [tib. skal bzang] was appointed as the Liaison Officer to them and when they left, they even made chuba dresses in Lhasa. Cut glasses were supposed to be very expensive and these two Americans had brought a large number of cut-glasses to be presented to the Dalai Lama and to other important personalities in Tibet.

Q

Did they seek permission to pass through Tibet? Or did they seek permission to transport weapons and military hardware, etc. through Tibet?

A

(Mr. Taring) They asked for a travel document, a lamyig. They wanted to seek the cooperation of the Tibet government to send military hardware, etc. so they came to be permitted to use our roads for this purpose. That was not agreed to by the Tibet government because it thought that if we allowed them to transport war materials, then we might become involved in it. So they thought it was better to remain neutral. The mission of Col. Tolstoy and Dolan did not materialize well and later Dolan died in China. Tolstoy finally returned to America. Col. Tolstoy was the son of the famous Russian writer Tolstoy. He was one of the White Russians.

Q

At that time, there were a good number of foreign nationals in Tibet doing some secret work. Some were agents of the Russians, some were agents of the Japanese and some

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were agents of the Guomindang Chinese. Somehow, many of the Chinese agents didn't know each other and they even started killing each other.

A

(Mr. Taring) Most of them were in the monasteries. They come from very long distances as true devotees of religion and went straight into the monasteries as real monks.

Q

What could they do in the monasteries? They had nothing to do in the monasteries. They might have entered the monastery, but their work had to be done in Lhasa, right?

A

They stayed in the monasteries and they moved around, but they didn't do much work except to collect information and send it to their respective headquarters.

Q

Sending the information to their respective headquarters may not have been their only job, but it seems they were also shaping things by pushing things in their favor.

A

(Mrs. Taring) I remember one sadu [Hindu ascetic] came to Tsarong house and he used to swallow about 4 yards of cotton cloth. He was an Indian. He wanted to go via Kham, but somehow the government did not allow him to stay and he went back. He may not have been an agent at all. At that time there were a lot of foreign nationalities like Japanese, Russians and Guomindang people working as secret agents in Tibet. How did they function?

Q

Heinrich Harrer and Aufschneider could not have been agents.

A

(Mr. Sambo) I heard they were agents.

(Mr. Taring) When they first came, they were complete beggars and since they were foreigners too, Thangmey looked after them.

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Q

Did you see them before Talama took them to their house and changed their clothes, etc.?

A

(Mr. Taring) Talama took them to his house and made new clothes for them.  
(Mrs. Taring) Madame Neel also had come to Tibet.

Q

Are you sure that Madame Neel came to Tibet?

A

(Mrs. Taring) She definitely came to Tibet. She brought one man along with her known as Yonten. She was an elderly lady.

Q

Did you really see her? Are you sure this is the same lady Alexander David Neel.

A

(Mrs. Taring) Though I did not see her myself, we had a female servant, Wangmo [tib. dbang mo], who had seen her. Then McGovern came to Tibet. He was somewhere in Drepung Monastery and being a white man by face, people recognized him and he was caught. Later he was sent back. He happened to be English. However, there was Kawaguchi of Japan. Something like the Japanese Doctor and then of course the famous, well known Japanese Thubten Gyentsen [tib. thub bstan rgyal mtshan] or Thubten Tashi [tib. thub bstan bkra shis] came.

(Mr. Sambo) It was Thubten Tashi.

Q

Were these three Japanese? Had they come to Tibet as Japanese?

A

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(Mrs. Taring) They came to Tibet as Japanese and they were not in disguise. Thubten Gyentsen remained in Sera Monastery as a monk for 11-12 years and Thubten Tashi remained about 5-6 years. (Mr. Sambo) There was a Mongolian known as Lobsang who later stayed somewhere behind the Potala in the Dzongyab area. I was told he was an important agent.

Q

Who was the big boss of the Guomindang agents?

A

(Mr. Sambo) There were so many Guomindang agents that they didn't even know each other and none suspected that they were working with each other and they started killing each other. And there were also Japanese and the Russians. One was killed in the early morning near the Muslim Mosque.

Q

Did the government of Tibet know about the presence of such agents?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Actually, it one thought he was working for one government and the other thought he was working for the other government so they killed each other. Most of the Guomindang agents were sent by their own different departments, hence they didn't recognize each other. I do not know which office sent whom, but later we came to know these agents. Probably much later they came to know each other. There was a man, Champa Wöser [tib. byams pa 'od zer]. He was of course a Chinese. He used to have a Chinese name too.

Q

Did he remain a monk?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No, no. No question of being a monk. He said one man by the name of Zhang Xingxing seemed to be the most important among them.

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Q

Was there any talk of a Mongolian Lama Telopa Huthogthu being an agent?

A

(Mr. Sambo) That was in 1942.

Q

I heard Telopa Huthokthu acted as one of the most important bosses of the Japanese agents as well as the Russian agents. Was that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He had a chandzö by the name of Talama.

(Mrs. Taring) Was this the same Talama who remained in Mussoorie later? What happened to him? He is no more.

Q

Do you believe Telopa and Talama were important persons with other agents working under them throughout Tibet? It was said that there were about 1,000 of them?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I do not know about these things, but there were definitely four or five hundred people working under them. Later in 1949, when the government of Tibet expelled the Chinese, they took advantage of this and they sent away all other agents except one Guomindang Agent who was a geshe in Gomang. He alone remained in Lhasa. When the government made the list of all the agents by name, then the matter was discussed in the Tsondu.

Q

So the government came to know that there were agents and they prepared the list of their names. How was this done? This was the time when they took the oath by putting the turquoise Buddha statue on their heads, right?

A

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(Mr. Sambo) Yes, the Chinese were sent back to China at that time. Namseling was assigned the job of making the list. Namseling made a detailed study of the suspected persons and the list was made. In this list, there were a large number of monks and geshes, so they decided to refer the matter to the Tsondu and submitted the list of the suspects. Among them if anyone offered to guarantee the integrity of any of the people listed, then they were allowed to stay, otherwise the government was determined to deport them. At that time, the abbot of Gomang College said that he would offer guarantees of behalf of the College, stating that the geshe is nothing but a pure monk who was a serious student and a member of their college. So his name was withdrawn. Later in 1950 when the Dalai Lama went to Yadong, he left Lhasa and in 1951 I saw him in Kalimpong.

Q

What was his name?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I don't remember the name. He was a Chinese monk.

Q

What was he doing in Kalimpong?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He stayed in Kalimpong for a long time and had a photo studio. Later he gave a press interview in which he stated that he had come from Tibet and that there was a danger of Communist China taking over Tibet. He admitted he was a servant of the Guomindang Chinese. So because of him, others were sent away.

Q

Was it about this time that the Mongolian Geshe Wangyal or somebody submitted a 10 point program for the reorganization of Tibet?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I never heard about it.

Q

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It was said that Baba Phüntso Wangye and a few others met and later they amended the program or were supposed to have submitted it through Geshe Wangyal via Phala Drönyerchemmo.

A

[No reply.]

Q

Was Geshe Wangyal among the persons who were sent away from Tibet?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Maybe.

(Mr. Taring) He may have not been sent away along with the others, but they might have used another method like making him leave Tibet before the others. He was asked to leave with friendly gestures. Something like that, I didn't remember exactly. [This is described in "A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Life and Political Times of Baba Phüntso Wangye].

Q

But Phüntso Wangye married a girl staying in Chumig Shar [tib. chu mig shar] or Tingoshar just before his departure from Tibet. If so, I heard the marriage was arranged by a Japanese agent. Is that true?

A

(Mr. Sambo) The list of the names of the agents was prepared and it had about three or four hundred persons from Lhasa itself and then some from Shigatse on the listed. At that time there was a monk by the name of Lobsang Chödrak [tib. blo bzang chos grags] who spoke English. He was born in the Gyelrong area and spoke Chinese very well. There was another Chinese also. They were sent from Shigatse.

Q

Did that list contain any persons living in areas other than Lhasa and Shigatse? For example, persons from Kongpo, Tsethang, Chamdo, Gyantse, etc?

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A

(Mr. Sambo) The screening was very carefully done and it was almost a total list. That time they were looking more for Chinese agents.

Q

Did the government expel these people saying that they were Chinese agents?

A

(Mr. Sambo) The Chinese were not the main target. The target was all secret agents. Mostly they were Chinese agents, but there were British and others too.

Q

How did this emergency come up in Tibet?

A

(Mr. Sambo) If the government did not send them immediately, they might remain as representatives of certain nations and later the Chinese agents might claim to be the new Chinese Representatives. If that happened, then it might have become necessary for the Tibet Government to recognize the new Communist Chinese government. So the Tibetan authorities kept this as top secret. There were Guomindang officers posted in Lhasa. These of course were the majority of persons, but on top of them, all the other agents were also expelled. Later I asked Namseling himself how he managed to collect such a perfect list of the secret agents and he said that he had no other alternative except to bribe one of those agents and collect the list that way. Otherwise there was no way to find them.

Q

When you deported those agents from Tibet, they might have returned and slipped into Tibet again. Was there any such case?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably there was no such case at that time. Photographs of the individuals were taken and so nobody returned again.



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Q

Where did you keep the photographs?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I saw the photographs. Photographs of all those agents were taken and collected. I saw them myself.

Q

Where were these photos kept?

A

(Mr. Sambo) The photos were with Namseling. Probably they kept them in the Deship [tib. bde zhib] office.

Q

Did they have their biodata? For example, their origin and their activities?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. They had a few pages attached to each photo on which quite a detailed story was written.

Q

Who was the monk official who first thought of deporting these agents?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I think it was Ngabö.

Q

How did Ngabö come to think of that?

A

(Mrs. Taring) It must be the British who told them.

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Q

No, no. Certainly not. Was Richardson in Lhasa at that time?

A

(Mr. Sambo) He was there. However he was not involved much at that time. He remained silent. Earlier when India was under the occupation of the British Government, he used to interfere a lot. After India's independence, he chose to keep silent.